

Kava

What is kava?

Kava is a plant native to the Pacific Islands that has been used as a ceremonial and relaxing drink by people of that region for centuries. The traditional kava drink is prepared by mixing powdered kava root with water.

Kava is also contained in some medicinal products such as tablets, capsules and tea bags for the treatment of anxiety.

Food Standards Code

Kava is listed in the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Standard 2.6.3 – Kava*.

Under this standard, kava is considered a food if it is:

- a beverage made from dissolving kava root using cold water only and not using any organic solvent; or
- dried or raw kava root.

This means that members of the Pacific Islander community or any other person are able to consume kava in the ACT. People wishing to sell, handle or consume kava may do so provided the conditions in the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Standard 2.6.3 – Kava* are met.

The warning statement; 'Use in moderation' and 'May cause drowsiness' are required to be displayed if kava is provided or sold as a food.

All other forms, kava are schedule 4 (prescription only) medicines and regulated in the ACT under the *Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 2008*.

ACT Food Business Registration

In the ACT, food is regulated under the *Food Act 2001*. There are food safety and registration requirements for businesses that handle food.

An organisation that provides kava to the public may require a Food Business Registration.

For more information about starting a food business in the ACT, please visit:

<https://www.health.act.gov.au/businesses/food-safety-regulation>

Declared Events

All food stalls operating at declared events, such as the National Multicultural Festival, must register with the Health Protection Service and nominate a Food Safety Supervisor. This includes non-profit community organisations.

To discuss food business registration requirements with a public health officer, please contact the Health Protection Service on 02 5124 9700 or hps@act.gov.au.

For information about the importation of kava, please visit the Office of Drug Control [website](#).

Accessibility

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